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General

Representations received for and against the Tobacco Bill.

*680 *Q.*—Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder: Will the Hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many representations have been received so far protesting against the Tobacco Bill and how many favouring it;

(*b*) in what way they have been disposed of;

(*c*) whether the Collectors of districts and the Members of the Board of Revenue have been consulted about the introduction of this measure;

(*d*) what the opinion offered by each of the Members of the Board of Revenue is;

(*e*) what each of the Collectors said about the proposal;

(*f*) whether any public bodies or recognized associations of the public were consulted to ascertain public opinion about this proposal of new taxation;

(*g*) if so, what they are and what opinion each of them offered; and

(*h*) whether any preliminary survey has been made about the number of licences likely to be issued, the general enforcement of the measure and other kindred matters and if so, whether a copy of the report got in the matter will be placed on the table?

A.—(*a*) Two hundred and seven representations have been received. Thirteen are in favour of the Bill and the rest are against it.

(*b*) Such of them as were received in time were placed before the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, which considered the Bill.

(*c*) The Board of Revenue was consulted. It is not usual to consult the members of that body individually. Collectors were consulted generally in 1931 on the proposals which led to this measure. They were not consulted on the present Bill.

(*d*) & (*e*) The Government are not prepared to divulge the opinions expressed by their officers.

(*f*) The Select Committee invited the opinions of all persons and bodies interested in the Bill.

(*g*) The information cannot be compiled without an undue expenditure of time and labour.

(*h*) The Government have received a report from the Board of Revenue regarding the number of licences likely to be issued. The Government are not prepared to lay the report on the table.

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Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"May I ask the Hon. Member in charge whether it is not in the interests of the House to publish the opinions of the Collectors?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"I think the hon. Lady Friend will find in answer to (c) that the Collectors were generally consulted in 1931. They were not consulted recently on the matter and it seems to me that no object would be gained in publishing the opinions which were given in 1931."

Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"May I know why the opinions were not gathered recently?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"Because Government considered they had all the information necessary."

Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder:—"What is the objection to place the report of the Board of Revenue before the House?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"I think that most of those who oppose the Bill do not like to read the report of the Board of Revenue on the Bill."

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan:—"May I know if the Government have not consulted Collectors recently before they prepared the Bill?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"The answer is here. Collectors were not consulted on the present Bill before the House."

B. Pocker Sahib Bahadur:—"May I know whether it is not a fact that there was a proposal to drop the Bill before the Select Committee?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"Yes, Sir, the majority of the Select Committee were against the proposal."

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan:—"In view of the knowledge of the Hon. the Revenue Member that all sections of the House are likely to oppose the Bill, has he considered the question of dropping the Bill?"

The Hon. Sir Charles Souter:—"I do not anticipate what this Hon. House intends to do."

Irrigation

Failure of water in the Chepad channel, Proddatur taluk.

* 681 *Q.*—Mr. T. Narasa Reddi: Will the Hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that water in the Chepad channel, Proddatur taluk, has been reduced this year and in consequence of which the paddy crops under this channel have suffered to a large extent;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that many sluices in the channel have been closed;